

REMARKS

It is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 6-7 and 9-12 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 2002/0157766 to Vuillaume et al ("Vuillaume '766) in view of US 5,405,650 to Boulanger et al ("Boulanger"""). As set forth below, even if the teachings of the references are combined, they do not result in the claimed invention.

Initially, it is noted that independent claims 6 and 12 each recite moisture-expressing means downstream in the direction in which the web moves of the consolidation device and an applicator downstream of the moisture-expressing means. This limitation is not met by Vuillaume '766. The Examiner deems Vuillaume '766 to teach "a suction unit (25) as a moisture-expressing means" and "an applicator unit (9)". In Vuillaume '766, the applicator unit (9) is located upstream of the suction unit (25) contrary to the claimed invention. This structural difference is never addressed in the action. Accordingly, it is requested that the rejection of claims 6-7 and 9-12 be withdrawn.

For the same reasons as set forth above, it is requested that the rejection of claim 8 under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over the above combination of references as applied to claims 6 - 7 and 9 - 12, and

further in view of US 2002/0168910 to Vuillaume et al ("Vuillaume '910") be withdrawn. Vuillaume '910 is specifically cited for its teachings in respect to a suction effect with a vacuum pressure of between 40 millibar and 700 millibar. Therefore, Vuillaume '910 does not remedy the structural deficiencies of Vuillaume '766 as noted above. Accordingly, it is requested that the rejection of claim 8 be withdrawn.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claims 6-12 are in condition for final allowance and such action is requested.

If there are any fees required by this communication, please charge the same to Deposit Account No. 16-0820, Order No. CAB-40211

Respectfully submitted,

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July 21, 2008